

INITIAL STUDY
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
OF
PROPOSED
PUENTE CREEK NATURE EDUCATION CENTER
CITY OF LA PUENTE

Lead Agency
The City of La Puente
15900 East Main Street
La Puente, California 91744

Prepared by:
Community Development Department
City of La Puente
15900 East Main Street
La Puente, CA 91744



**CITY OF LA PUENTE
ENVIRONMENTAL SURVEY**

- 1. Project Title: Puente Creek Nature Education Center**
- 2. Lead Agency Name and Address: City of La Puente**
- 3. Contact Person and Phone Number: Gregg Yamachika, Interim Community Development Director**
- 4. Project Location: Between Nelson Elementary School and Puente Creek, La Puente, CA 91744**
- 5. Project Sponsor's Name and Address: City of La Puente, 15900 E. Main Street, La Puente, CA 91744**
- 6. General Plan Designation: Single-Family Residential**
- 7. Zoning: R-1**
- 8. Description of Project:** (describe the whole action involved, including but not limited to later phases of the project, and any secondary, support, or off-site features necessary for its implementation. Attach additional sheets if necessary.)

The City of La Puente intends to acquire a vacant 41,630 square foot parcel located on the north side of Nelson Avenue between Nelson Elementary School, 330 N. California Avenue, and Puente Creek. The property is roughly triangular in shape and is flat and undeveloped. The City wishes to develop a Nature Education Center on the property to provide the local community as well as the students of the surrounding school districts the opportunity to learn about environmental issues that face our communities. The educational features that will be offered will include a Nature Walk, which will focus on flora native to Southern California, and interactive displays under a protective patio cover. The nature walk will provide interpretive, informational signage regarding plant characteristics. Along the walk,

interactive displays pertaining to the environment, conservation, and resource protection will be provided to enhance the learning experience. In keeping with the environmental theme, pervious paving material will be utilized in the construction of the on-site parking lot in order to reduce the on-site runoff and to serve as a demonstration project to illustrate how parking lots and other hardscape surfaces can be ecologically sensitive.

Financing for the acquisition of the property and development of the site will be from a grant from the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy.

9. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting: Briefly describe the project's surroundings.

The property is bounded on the north and west by playground and ball fields in the Nelson Elementary School, on the east by the Puente Creek Channel, and the south by Nelson Avenue. Beyond the immediate surroundings, general land uses to the north, west and east include single-family residential neighborhoods and industrial uses to the south, across Nelson Avenue. The property is accessed from a narrow frontage on Nelson Avenue, a portion of which may be over the Puente Creek Channel easement.

10. Other agencies whose approval is required.
(e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement)

San Gabriel Rivers and Mountains Conservancy-	Financing and Project Design
Los Angeles County Flood Control District-	For Access Easement over Puente Creek
Los Angeles County Fire Department-	Fire Access and Plan Check
Los Angeles County Sanitation District-	Sewer Connection
Southern California Edison,	
Southern California Gas Company-	For additional service connections.

Environmental Factors Potentially Affected:

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use and Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation/Circulation | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Population and Housing | <input type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities and Service Systems |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Geological Problems | <input type="checkbox"/> Energy and Minerals Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Water | <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards | <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality | <input type="checkbox"/> Noise | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance | | |

Determination

(To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared. ☐

I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because the mitigation measures described on an attached sheet have been added to the project. A NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared. ☒

I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required. ☐

I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect(s) on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets, if the effect is a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated." An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed. ☐

I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there WILL NOT be a significant effect in this case because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR pursuant to applicable standards and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project. ☐

Gregg Yamachika
Signature

Gregg Yamachika
Printed Name

2/4/04
Date

City of La Puente
For

Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
III. GEOLOGICAL PROBLEMS. Would the proposal result in or expose people to potential impacts involving:				
a) Fault rupture? (d)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
b) Seismic ground shaking? (d)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Seismic ground failure, including liquefaction? (c)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Seiche, tsunami, or volcanic hazard? (a)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
e) Landslides or mudflows? (a)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
f) Erosion, changes in topography or unstable soil conditions from excavation, grading, or fill? (a,c)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
g) Subsidence of the land? (c)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) Expansive soils? (b)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
i) Unique geologic or physical features? (a)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
IV. WATER. Would the proposal result in:				
a) Changes in absorption rates, drainage patterns, or the rate and amount of surface runoff? (c)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Exposure of people or property to water related hazards such as flooding? (c, g)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
c) Discharge into surface waters or other alteration of surface water quality (e.g. temperature, dissolved oxygen or turbidity)? (c)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
d) Changes in the amount of surface water in any water body? (c)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X

Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
e) Changes in currents, or the course or direction of water movements? (c)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
f) Change in the quantity of ground waters, either through direct additions or withdrawals, or through interception of an aquifer by cuts or excavations, or through substantial loss of groundwater recharge capability? (c)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
g) Altered direction or rate of flow of groundwater? (c)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
h) Impacts to groundwater quality? (c)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
i) Substantial reduction in the amount of groundwater otherwise available for public water supplies? (c)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
V. AIR QUALITY. Would the proposal:				
a) Violate any air quality standard or contribute to an existing or projected air quality violation? (c)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
b) Expose sensitive receptors to pollutants? (c)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
c) Alter air movement, moisture, or temperature. (c)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
d) Create objectionable odors? (c)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
VI. TRANSPORTATION/CIRCULATION. Would the proposal result in:				
a) Increased vehicle trips or traffic congestion? (c)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Hazards to safety from design features (e.g. sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)? (c)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
c) Inadequate emergency access or access to nearby uses? (c)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
d) Insufficient parking capacity on-site or offsite? (c,h)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X

Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XII. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS.				
Would the proposal result in a need for a new systems or supplies, or substantial alterations to the following utilities.				
a) Power or natural gas? (c)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
b) Communications systems? (c)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
c) Local or regional water treatment or distribution facilities? (c)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
d) Sewer or septic tanks? (c)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
e) Storm water drainage? (c)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
f) Solid waste disposal? (c)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
g) Local or regional water supplies? (c)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
XIII. AESTHETICS. Would the proposal:				
a) Affect a scenic vista or scenic highway? (a,c)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
b) Have a demonstrable negative aesthetic effect? (c)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
c) Create light or glare? (c)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
XIV. CULTURAL RESOURCES. Would the proposal:				
a) Disturb paleontological resources? (a,c)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
b) Disturb archaeological resources? (a,c)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
c) Affect historical resources? (a,c)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
d) Have the potential to cause a physical change which would affect unique ethnic cultural values? (a,c)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
e) Restrict existing religious or sacred uses within the potential impact area? (a,c)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

I. Land Use and Planning.

(a-e) No Impact.

The proposed project does not conflict with the City's General Plan in that it designates the property for single-family residential development and the Zoning Ordinance, the implementing document for the General Plan, provides for the establishment of parks in the R-1 zone of which this property is a part.

The proposed Center will not conflict with any environmental plan or policies since none exist for the area or are affected by the area.

The project does not affect any agricultural resources or operations since there are none in the vicinity of the project. Also, the project will not disrupt the physical arrangement of established communities since it will be constructed on a vacant and undeveloped site. No residential neighborhoods will be affected and no streets will be added, closed, re-aligned or widened.

The project will be compatible with existing land uses in the area since it will be surrounded by school athletic and playground fields to the west and north and separated from the residential neighborhood to the east by the Puente Creek channel. It is also separated from the industrial uses on the south by Nelson Avenue. In addition, the project will be architecturally compatible with the purpose and intent of the Center by incorporating Southwest architectural elements that are consistent with the City's General Plan Design Element.

II. Population and Housing

(a-c) No Impact.

The proposed project will not affect local or regional population estimates or induce growth since it is not in and does not affect any residential areas. In addition the project will not cause the construction, demolition, removal, reduction or displacement of any housing.

III. Geological Problems.

(a,d,e,f,i) No Impact.

The project will not expose people to fault ruptures since no fault zones are within the vicinity of the property. The closest fault to the site is the Puente Hills fault which is approximately 1.5 miles from the property.

The project is not located within a volcanic, seiche, or tsunami hazard zone and there are no unique geologic or physical features on the project site.

The topography of the site and the surrounding area is relatively flat and therefore does not present the possibility of landslides or mudslides during or after periods of heavy precipitation.

The Center will consist of a public restroom and a open-sided patio structure for interactive and static displays. No basement or subterranean levels are proposed. Therefore, given the relatively small size of the buildings and the maintenance of the general existing contour of the surrounding ground, construction grading will not be significant and no increase in erosion potential or instability of soils will result from the project.

(b,c,g,h) Less than Significant Impact

Although the subject property is not in danger of a fault rupture, the proximity of the Puente Hills fault, the Elysian Park thrust fault which this area overlies, and other faults in the region have the potential of generating strong earth motion on the subject property. The project site has also been identified by the California Department of Conservation, Mines and Geology Division to be subject to soil liquifaction and subsidence during seismic shaking. In addition, expansive soils are prevalent in the area and may be present on the property. However, it is not anticipated that these factors will expose people to undue danger because the buildings will comply with specific compaction and building foundation requirements set forth by the Uniform Building Code to address such potential.

IV. Water.

(a,b,c,d,f,g,h,i) No impact.

The subject property is not within the 100- or 500 year flood plain and is not located in the inundation area of Whittier Narrows Dam or Santa Fe Dam should either of these dams fail, but the property is located in the inundation area of the Puddingstone Dam in San Dimas. However, the establishment of the Nature Center does not increase exposure of people to flood hazards since the potential for inundation already exists and since the project is intended to serve schools and the population in the surrounding area that are also subject to inundation. In addition, the project will not have growth inducing impacts to cause more people to be exposed to flood hazards.

The project will result in the over-covering of up to 15,000 square feet of ground area which has the potential of reducing the amount of precipitation percolation into the ground. However, the Center will include drainage systems designed to capture runoff from impermeable surfaces and allow percolation of precipitation on-site through the use of permeable pavement in the parking lot and catchment basins. In keeping with its environmental education purpose, it is the goal of the project to provide a model of National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) concepts.